Docket No.: 98 P 7512 US 03
App. No.: 09/071,664

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1-16 and 18-19 are pending. Claims 1 and 11 are amended.

Item 1 of the Office Action rejects claims 1-16 and 18-19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Smiley et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,982,863), hereinafter "Smiley".

Item 2 responds to arguments made by Applicants in the previous Amendment.

To advance prosecution, all rejections will be treated as though applied to the claims as amended. Applicants traverse the rejections and request reconsideration.

Claim Rejections

In the Office Action, and in the office action previous to the Office Action, the Examiner "agrees with Applicant that the call-back in Smiley is not implemented immediately right after Doctor Care Unit (DCU) receiving a call-back request from a patient, but is by appointment". However, the Examiner found that a distinction based on the acknowledged deficiencies of Smiley was not clearly expressed in Applicants' claims.

In response, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 11 to more explicitly distinguish the claims from Smiley. In particular, claim 1, as amended, now recites a step of "the server immediately attempting to contact the second user based on the first user requesting". Claim 11, as amended, now recites a limitation that transferring of the call back request is "immediately after" the first input device's "sending the call back request" and "if the second user signals to the network connection to return the call, for immediately and automatically attempting to connect the first user and the second user". Such limitations of claims 1 and 11 are a portion of the deficiencies of Smiley that have been acknowledged by the Examiner. In fact, Smiley teaches against such immediate action by the server in favor of delayed, appointment-based action.

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All dependent claims 2-10, 12-16, and 17-19 include all limitations of their respective base claims 1 or 11 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as are their respective base claims. The assertions and rejections from the Office Action regarding the dependent claims are therefore rendered moot.
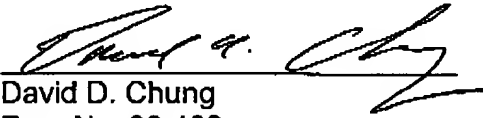
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been overcome.

Conclusion

Therefore, Applicants submit that their invention is not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the references of record. Therefore, it is submitted that all of the claims are allowable over the art of record and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version of Amendments with Markings to Show Changes Made

1.   (Five times amended) A method for providing an automated call connection system comprising the steps of:

a first user contacting a call server;

the first user requesting the server to deliver a call back request to a second user;

<u>the server immediately attempting to contact the second user based on the first user requesting;</u>

the server prompting the second user whether to call the first user back;

the second user optionally signaling acceptance of the call back request to the server; and

if the second user signals to accept the call back request, the server **[immediately and]** automatically attempting to connect the first user and the second user.

11.   (Five times amended) A system for providing an automated call connection comprising:

a first user input device for initiating and sending a call back request;

a second user output device for receiving the call back request; and

a server for transferring<u>, immediately after the sending the call back request,</u> the call back request from the first user output device to the second user output device and for prompting the second user whether to call back the first user, and if the second user signals to the network connection to return the call, for immediately and automatically attempting to connect the first user and the second user.

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